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meanings: and gives it as his opinion, that such use of words is tolerable only in a burlesque poem. As an instance of the propriety of this use, he cites the following couplet from Pope's Rape of the Lock.

"Here, thou great Anna, whom three realms obey,
"Dost sometimes counsel *take*..... and sometimes tea."

He then concludes his sentence of condemnations, roundly asserting, that in all of Virgil's writings a similar instance occurs but once. What the instance is he has not mentioned, at least, that I can recollect.

But to show the *truth* of this hardy assertion, I shall cite a few passages out of *many* more of a similar nature, which might be extracted from Virgil.

.....Moresque viris et moenia ponet.
Æn. i. l. 265.

Crudeles aras, trajectaque pectora ferro
Nudavit. Æ. i. l. 355.

Inclusos utero Danaos & pinea furtim
Laxat claustra Sinon. Æ. ii. l. 258.

.....Nec voci iræque pepercit.
Æ. ii. l. 534.

.....Inceptoq; et sedibus hæret
iisdem. Æ. ii. l. 654.

.....Et cælo palmas cum voce tetendit.
Æ. ii. l. 688.

In each of these passages the verb is evidently connected with the depending nouns in a difference of application; and the practice of Ovid is well authorized by that of the correct Virgil. The judgment of Hurd seems to have been biassed by an early prepossession, originating in the passage quoted from the English poet; and thus biassed he proceeded to judge of the idiom of one language by the idiom of another.

ON THE PASSAGE OF VOLTAIRE.

CONTINENTAL authors have contracted a very strong prejudice against our older tragic writers, and against Shakespeare in particular. For this there has been some foundation. The great latitude assumed by them in the formation and conduct of their plots, and their deviations from those rules of criticism to which the French writers in particular adhere with such scrupulous exactness, afford sufficient grounds for censure. The ignorance of our language increases this prejudice. Some part, however, must be attributed to misrepresentation. Voltaire is a strong instance of this. The remarks which he makes on the prince of English tragedy, show how cautious we

should be in placing implicit credit on the representations of another, however great his talents or well established his character. Some of his observations are very just, and serve to give currency to all. Our dependence on his judgment is farther increased by the apparent candour with which he premises his criticisms. He begins by saying, "that one reason for the prejudice against Shakespeare so common on the Continent, is, that his errors only have been taken notice of; but that no one has translated any of those strong and brilliant passages which make atonement for his faults." The truth of this is undeniable. His most zealous admirers will allow that though he is the most sublime, he is also the most unequal of poets; and therefore that those who hear of his faults alone, must wonder at the perversity of English taste. Voltaire proceeds to give a reason for this unjust mode of treatment. "Nothing," says he, "is easier than to exhibit in prose all the silly impertinences of a poet; but it is a very difficult task to translate his fine verses. Two pages which display some of the beauties of a great genius are of infinitely more value than volumes of comments: greater advantage may be reaped from a dozen of verses of Homer or Virgil, than from all the critiques which have been written on these two poets." In order to illustrate these observations, he proceeds to give a translation of a select passage. That which he has chosen, if not one of the most sublime, is certainly very striking, and such as would be selected by any one desirous of giving a specimen of the nervous diction and bold sentiments of this poet. It is the celebrated soliloquy of Hamlet upon death. But who would suppose after such an appearance of candour and impartiality, that the words of Shakespeare would be perverted into a declamation against priests and religion? In order that the reader may judge for himself, I here lay before him Voltaire's words and a literal translation, in which, though the beauty of the expressions may not be preserved, the sentiments which the French critic puts into the mouth of the Danish prince are correctly stated. The passage is as follows...

Demeure, il faut choisir et passer à l'instant
De la vie, à la mort, ou de l'Etre au néant.
Dieux cruels, s'il en est, éclairez mon courage.
Faut il veillir courbé sous la main qui m'outrage,

Supporter, ou finir mon malheur et mon
sort ?
Qui suis je ? Qui m'arrete ? Et qu'est ce
que la mort ?
C'est la fin de nos maux, c'est mon uni-
que azile
Après de long transports, c'est un som-
meil tranquile.
On s'endort, et tout mort, mais un af-
freux reveil
Doit succeder peutetre aux douceurs de
sommeil !
On nous menace, on dit que cette courte
vie
De tourmens eternels est aussitot suivie
O mort ! moment fatal ! affreuse eter-
nite !
Tout cour a ton seul nom se glace epou-
vante.
Eh ! qui pourroit sans toi supporter cette
vie
De nos pretres menteurs benir l'hypocrisie ;
D'une indigne maitresse enoncer les er-
reurs.
Ramper sous un ministre, adorer ses
hauteurs ;
Et moutrer les languers de son ame abat-
tue
A des amis ingrats qui detournant la
vue ?
La mort seroit trop douce en ces extre-
mites,
Mais le scrupule parle, et nous cria, Ar-
reter,
Il defend a nos mains cet heureux homi-
cide
Et d'un Heros guerrier fait un Chretien ti-
vide, &c.

Pause, we must make a choice, and
instant pass
From life to death, from being into no-
thing
Ye cruel gods, if so, inflame my cou-
rage,
Must I grow old bent 'neath the hand
that wrongs me,
Support, or end my misery and my lot ?
Who am I ? what arrests me ? what is
death ?
It is my misery's close, my only shelter.
After long tumults, 'tis a tranquil sleep.
We sleep...all dies...but dreadful re-
collection
To such a pleasing sleep perhaps ensues.
They threaten us ; they say that this short
life
Is instant followed by eternal torments.
Death...our last moments... dread eter-
nity !

At thy sole name, all hearts congeal with
horror.

Who, but for thee, would undergo this
life....

Bless the hypocrisy of lying priests.

Enshrine the failings of a worthless mis-
tress :

Crouch to a minister ; adore his pride ;
And show the weakness of a soul de-
press'd

To thankless friends who turn away their
eyes.

Death were too sweet in such extremity :
But doubt speaks out, and calls on us to

pause,

Forbids our hands this happy suicide,

And turns a hero to a timid christian, &c.

This version is qualified by the follow-
ing words....“Don't imagine that I have
translated Shakespeare in a servile man-
ner : Woe to the writer who gives a
literal translation, and thus enervates the
sense, and extinguishes all its fire. On
such an occasion we may justly affirm,
that the letter kills, but the spirit quickens.”

An English reader would rather reflect
with sorrow and astonishment on the
perversion of mind, which, like a diseased
habit of body, can turn the most inno-
cent and wholesome food into poison, to
increase the malady with which it is al-
ready devoured.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

WILL any of your poetical Corres-
pondents oblige the public by
an adequate translation of the following
beautiful lines, addressed from Dr. Pit-
cairn to Lord Dundee.

Yours, &c.

SCOTUS.

Te moriente, novas accepit Scotia legis,
Accepitque novos, te moriente, deos.

Illa tibi superesse nequit, nec tu potes
illa :

Ergo, Caledonia, nomen inane, vale.

Tuque vale, gentis quondam fortissime
ductor,

Ultime Scotorum, atque ultime Græme
vale.